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L E T T E R

T O

Richard Lord Bishop of Landaff,

"R. W. L. G."

ON THE SUBJECT OF

HIS LORDSHIP'S LETTER TO THE LATE
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

By RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

L O N D O N :

Printed for CHARLES DILLY, in the Poultry;
and J. WALTER, Charing-cross.

M.DCC.LXXXIII.

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MY LORD,

UPON your consecration to the see of Landaff, your lordship has taken a very early opportunity of publishing certain proposals for the benefit, as you conceive, of the established church; and you have addressed them to the head of the church, under the title of *A Letter to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, by Richard lord bishop of Landaff*. A few copies of this pamphlet you had circulated in print some months ago, but for reasons not necessary to be explained, a more general publication

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of it has been postponed from November to March.

The regulations recommended by your lordship in this pamphlet are proposed to be carried into effect by the introduction of a bill or bills into parliament. It is from your lordship's authority we are given to understand that you did not think fit to submit these proposals, in the first instance, to the judgement of his Grace of Canterbury and the bench at large; and, if any one should be of opinion, this would have been a measure more respectful to your right reverend brethren, than the step you have now taken, you signify your dissent from such opinion: You profess a *disposition not to be wanting in respect to any of your brethren, but you cannot give up a decided opinion out of respect to any man or set of men; and as to the utility of making the objects of your Letter publicly known, you have not the least doubt or hesitation of mind.* You observe, that *if you had previously consulted the bench of bishops, you might have run the risque of treating them with apparent disrespect; for had they advised you to suppress what you now make public, you would have*
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been under the necessity of neglecting their advice : You inform us moreover, that you much dislike all private caballing in matters of public import.—The world at large is so apt to be edified and entertained by every thing that falls from your lordship's pen, that any reasons which satisfy you in the case would in all probability content the majority of mankind: but as you have entered into a discussion of the motives why you did not think fit to communicate this Letter to his Grace of Canterbury or any others of the bench ; many of your readers, who would not else have concerned themselves in the question, will now be tempted to take it into consideration, and as it is not improbable but some persons may be found to maintain opinions opposite to your lordship's, so it is possible there may be some maintainers of those opinions who (like your lordship) may not be disposed *to give them up out of respect to those of any other man*, though ever so much *decided* in the question.

Some may be so tenacious as to maintain, that it would have been more respectful in the junior bishop of the bench to have communicated his ideas to his senior brethren, in a

matter of ecclesiastical arrangement materially affecting the interests of the hierarchy. “ If
 “ the new-made bishop of Landaff is so decidedly convinced of the expediency of this
 “ reform, if it is so clear,” these reasoners may say, “ to the intellects of this novice
 “ in the prelacy, why might not those of
 “ more experience and equal talents view
 “ it with the same degree of perspicuity ?” But this kind of reasoning will not impose upon your sagacity ; you suspected that the judgement of your brethren would not be with you in this proposal, else you would not have excluded them from their share of credit in the measure ; neither would you have lost the grace of doing that with their concurrence previously obtained, which ultimately cannot be done without it. This would at least have given them an opportunity of acceding with dignity to a self-denying plan, and not *compelling them to come in* by the terrors of the laity and the invectives of the press. If they had agreed with you in the great outline of the reform, they might possibly have done some little unimportant underwork in the modification of it for parliament ; in the wording and formation

tion of a bill perhaps they might, by themselves or their connexions, have worked under your lordship's auspices to some use and account ; for I hope I shall not offend in supposing, that the compilation of a bill for parliament may have been amongst the very few branches of study that did not come under your contemplation *inter sylvas academi*, as you express it ; or in plain English, at the university of Cambridge. However, of this it is fit I speak doubtingly, as you tell us you had revolved this plan of reform in various ways, whilst you was there, and had canvassed it in conversation with your learned and pious companions in that seat of erudition ; though you think it might have been deemed great presumption in you to have presented your thoughts to his Grace of Canterbury from your station there, before you was elevated to the rank you now hold in the church.

Instances of humility in men of merit have a peculiar grace ; but how it could have been deemed presumption in the professor of divinity, to offer his sentiments to the head of the church, with a modest intention to promote the honour and service of the

established religion, I am at a loss to divine ; and I am so unfortunate as to think, in opposition to your lordship's better judgement, that if the mode you have now taken of publishing this Letter as a pamphlet without communicating it to the person it is addressed to, was in either case to be adopted, it would have been more excusable in a private churchman so to have acted towards the archbishop, than in a member of his own fraternity. A man may be well capable of projecting schemes and systems of reform *inter sylvas academi*, but if he is in a private and subordinate station, he cannot so readily call the elders of the church together, or induce them to sit in council on his proposals. Having no official access to the bench or to the senate, such a man will of necessity address himself to the public, and through the channel of the press usher his ideas to the attention of the legislature ; but that a prelate, who can at all times call upon his brethren for their collected opinions, that a lord of parliament, who in his place can produce and put in motion his own suggestions for the benefit of church or state, should think it more respectful to his
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brother bishops, and more becoming of himself, to make public his opinions for reforming the church through the channel of the press, rather than through his own organs in that senate to which he belongs, is a refinement in propriety to which my comprehension does not reach.

If the bench of bishops had in part or whole rejected your suggestions; if the legislature had wanted the will, or not possessed the virtue, to adopt and make efficient your proposals, the press was still open, and as your lordship's opinion was peremptory and decided for resorting to publication, though any man or every man was opposed to you in opinion, there was no danger but that in the last instance these inestimable researches, revolved in so many various ways, and canvassed in the course of so many learned conversations amongst the groves of Cambridge, would have seen the light. You would then at least have known what your right reverend brethren had to say upon the subject, and to which branch of the legislature to have imputed the obstruction of your reform; indeed it is so hard to find any reason for passing over your brethren, and resorting to publication in the

very first instance, if you could have supposed they would have joined you in the measure, that I must believe you took for granted they would not be with you in it. It is at least a fair imputation to the contrary ; it is a mode of dealing that most certainly implies suspicion, and therefore, until a want of confidence can be made appear to be a mark of respect, I cannot think your lordship has chosen the happiest method of expressing that courtesy to the bench which you are pleased to profess, and no doubt intended to observe.

There is one kind of suspicion, which your lordship's want of confidence in the bench of bishops, and indeed the tenour of your publication, will naturally insinuate to the world, and yet I am loth to believe it weighed in your thoughts, which is that of worldly-minded prejudices in favour of the unequal distribution of episcopal revenues, or, as your lordship expresses it, *of a mean attention to the emoluments of the present mode of church government*. Now, as you have in your own person pointedly disavowed *any mean attention* of this sort, and expect with justice that we should believe you, it would
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be hard indeed to suppose, with any shadow of Christian charity in our bosoms, that you should arrogate to yourself alone a spiritual purity, for which you do not credit the rest of your fraternity. But then again it is just as hard to account, if you had credited the bench for this spiritual purity, why you should not have trusted them with your plan of reform; a plan, which can only be carried into execution by their aid, and the sanction of the legislature: it is as hard to discover a motive for your conduct in suppressing this plan, whilst you was a private divine, when no such imputation would have attended it's publication, and seizing that very moment for doing it, when the inference could not fail of being made in their disfavour and contempt.

Your lordship, amongst other good plans that you are meditating for the honour and advantage of the church, wishes to reduce the bishoprics to a level in point of income; and though you have long conceived this plan of levelling the richer mitres with the poorer, you will not broach it, whilst you are a private man, uninterested in the proposal: but no sooner do you step into the

poor fee of Landaff than out comes a pamphlet, in which you call upon the archbishop of Canterbury, as head of the church, to adopt your plan ; or rather I should say, you call upon the people to shame his Grace, and the rest of the bench, into a compelled accordance to your ideas. A bishop proclaims to the people, through the organs of the press, what it is right for his own order to do, and he holds it for a mark of respect to his own order, not to let them into the secret beforehand. A lord of parliament harangues the world, without doors, upon a plan of reform, which he himself is competent to propose to the supreme hereditary counsellors of the nation in his own place, within doors. This is very polite to the people, my lord ; but I much doubt it's courtesy to your brother peers : to the spiritual part of them, at least, it will convey a suspicion, that you doubted either their virtue or their understanding. By the same rule of conduct any senator, in either house, having a plan to propose for the benefit of church or state, may walk out of the doors of the senate to which he belongs, and proclaim it from the hustings, or publish it from a newspaper,

paper, and tell us in excuse, that he thinks this the most respectful manner of acting towards that senate, which he thus deserts. “ I tell you without doors,” he might say, “ what I and all within doors ought to do.” “ Have they refused to do it ?” one might answer ; “ No,” he will say, “ for I was resolved to communicate it to you in the first instance, and then, if they do it afterwards, the merit will be your’s, for mobbing them into the measure.” “ This is very civil to us, the people,” one of their number may reply, “ but how does it look towards your brethren ?” “ Perfectly polite and considerate ; I mean it as the greatest mark of respect I can shew them : for if they had not agreed to it, I was determined to tell you, and it is only making short work by beginning where I must have finished.”

I must not omit to observe upon one other remark, which your lordship has thrown out by way of justification for passing over the bishops ; viz. *that you much dislike all private caballing in matters of public import.* This method of excusing your neglect is of the same complexion with the neglect itself. If the omission was an instance of respect, so may be

be also this reason for it. When you was a private man, you held it no disgrace to take into your council *men of disinterested probity, true Christian simplicity, and excellent erudition, inter sylvas academi*; when you became a bishop, you considered a council of bishops as a *private cabal, which you much dislike*. Is it because *that disinterested probity, Christian simplicity, and excellent erudition*, which you found amongst your fellow-students at Cambridge, is not to be found amongst your brother bishops in London? God forbid! If it be so, you do well to reform them; if it be not so, you do not well to neglect them. As to *levelling* them, you have effectually done that already by the word *cabal*; and I find you make a very sensible distinction in favour of your Cambridge friends; in their instance, it is a consultation of good and learned men; in that of the bishops, it is private cabal, from which you revolt with dislike.

So much for the motives: it will now be proper to examine the matter of your publication.

Your lordship, in the outset of your pamphlet, takes some pains to defend the zeal of the clergy of England, for the church
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establishment, against the imputation of an interested attention to the *craft, by which they have their livelihood*; and this you do by contending, that they would in general procure as good, or a better provision for themselves and families in other professions, if there was no church establishment. This is an assertion, my lord, for which the clergy will not thank you, such of their number at least who have a zeal for their religion; for if they could thrive so well in the liberal professions without an established church, it should seem as if your lordship admitted that the liberal professions, and of course the state in general, were not dependant upon that establishment for their prosperity; in fewer words, you assert that the state could exist and flourish without the church, a doctrine rather novel for a member of the right reverend bench. You say it is a rare thing to see a churchman lifting his posterity above the common level, by the profits of his profession: this allegation experience contradicts by numerous instances, and I hope the example of your lordship's posterity will add to the number. You say, that an exertion of the same talents, which serve to
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place a man on the bench of bishops, might have placed him on the bench of judges, and the genius of an archbishop might have raised him to the dignity of a lord high chancellor. This is another allegation, I conceive, for which your brethren, and the religion they profess, will have no cause to thank you; it is to be hoped that some bishops have been elevated to that order by the purity of their morals and the exemplariness of their piety; I have not hitherto understood that these are requisites to the promotion of a lawyer: an acuteness of talents, and an adroitness in defending either side of a cause, or even making the best of a bad one, are recommendations at the bar, but I did not know they were so considered in the pulpit. The defenders of religion it is presumed never argue but on the strongest side; and the talents of a country parson may be as dissimilar from those of a country attorney, as his principles may be, without any derogation from his understanding or profession.

In times past, it is true, the great seal has been frequently in the hands of churchmen, but I believe few instances occur of men
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making their way to the mitre through the medium of the law. We need not, however, go back to times past for instances of genius in the profession of the priesthood ; the whole circle of arts and sciences bears testimony to their talents and erudition. Whether we speak of them individually or collectively, it is not possible to say too much in their praise : the state is indebted to them as to subjects of the most valuable sort, and they have a claim upon its protection in a peculiar degree : no honest man can envy them their revenues, no prudent man would wish to see them diminished ; by their manners they ornament society, by their morals they amend it. When I compare them with the illiterate lazy swarm that I have met in countries of another profession of faith, I have felt a national pride of heart in the comparison : when I see their children spread through all the liberal professions, when I meet them in our fleets and armies, in our public offices and senate, I cannot but consider every thing that threatens their prosperity, as a danger, in which every good subject has an interest.

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In your next paragraph you admonish his Grace of Canterbury not to let the *mere term innovation* alarm him, or as your lordship more *fully* expresses it, *alarm his apprehension*; that if such was the tendency of your proposals, you would have thrown them and your pen into the fire.—I beg your lordship's pardon for reversing the order of your expression in this quotation, for though you are pleased to declare that you *would have thrown your pen first and your proposals after it*, it would perhaps have been a more natural course to have destroyed the work first and the tool afterwards, as it is not altogether so clear how you would have written the proposals after you had burnt your pen. You remark, *that it is commonly said wise and good men look upon every attempt to reform what is amiss in church or state as a matter of dangerous tendency*; but you express a doubt, whether *there is not as much timidity as wisdom, as much indolence as goodness in this caution*. I think you have not risked much in the assertion of this doubt, for I am at a loss to understand how any *wise or good* man can knowingly reject any *wise or*
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good reform. Mere speculative schemes of Utopian policy will not impose upon the sagacity of a *wise* man, though they glitter in idea; because he will weigh the consequences, and foresee the inconveniences which the shallow short-sighted projector did not apprehend: but convince such a man of the *wisdom* of a proposal, and if he does not adopt it he is no longer a *wise* man. It does not follow that he has as much *timidity* as *wisdom*; *timidity* may not have been his motive for rejecting the proposal, and in that case he has none of either quality. If it was his motive, so far is he from bringing these two qualities to a balance, that it is evident he abounds in one and is devoid of the other. The same remark will hold good in the case of opposers to reforms in the church.

Your lordship next proceeds to state to the archbishop the proposals you have in contemplation; but before you do this, you remind his Grace of a maxim of Solomon, “not to meddle with them who are given to change;” in which maxim your lordship agrees with that wise king; and you add a pious ejaculation to God, *to forbid*

that either the archbishop of Canterbury or yourself should be induced *to meddle with them who would wish you to change your fear of God into impiety, or your reverence for the king and constitution into anarchy or rebellion.* Since the penning of this ejaculation, the worthy metropolitan has been gathered to his ancestors, and it is universally understood his Grace was never guilty of the crime you warn him to avoid; the cautionary prayer therefore rests only with your lordship, and to that *let all the people say Amen!*

The proposals are two, viz. one respecting the revenues of the bishops; the other respecting those of the inferior clergy, for the better-apportioned distribution of what the state allows for the maintenance of the established clergy.

With respect to the bishoprics, you decline the trouble of entering into the history of the establishment of the several archbishopricks and bishopricks, though you observe *it would be an easy matter to display much erudition on the subject*; and you content yourself with observing, that the fact is certain, that the revenues and patronages of the sees are very unequal in value. On this fact you
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ground a proposal, that a bill should be brought into parliament *to render the bishopricks more equal to each other, both with respect to income and patronage, by annexing part of the estates and part of the preferments of the richer bishopricks to the poorer, as they become vacant* : by which latter proviso you observe that *no injury is proposed to be done to the present possessors of the richer bishopricks.*

The advantages resulting from this plan are; first, the releasing the poorer bishops from the necessity of holding ecclesiastical preferments *in commendam* with their bishopricks; *a practice, which bears hard upon the rights and expectations of the rest of the clergy; is disagreeable to the bishops themselves, and which exposes them to much, perhaps, undeserved obloquy.*

It is undoubtedly to be wished, that the necessity of supporting the poorer bishopricks by the aid of preferments *in commendam* did not exist; and so long as it does exist, care should be taken to prevent abuse and excess in the practice; certainly they might be used with more moderation than they are in some instances at present. The bishopricks, whose reveues do not suffice to maintain

the dignity of their possessors, may easily be enumerated; in some of these cases, and perhaps in all, measures might be taken for aiding the possessors, without stripping the church at large of any of its parochial benefices or livings; *a cure of souls* need in no case to be annexed *in commendam* to a bishoprick, and it is certainly to be wished it was not. Bishops, whose revenues do not reach the annual income of two thousand pounds, or near upon, might be relieved in various modes without *the cure of souls*. When I except *the cure of souls* from preferments held *in commendam*, I hope I may without presumption add, that the *care of education*, and *superintendence of discipline*, ought also to be excepted; and it has always struck me, that masterships of colleges in our universities are not consistently tenable with the duties of a diocese. If in any instances these are held with bishopricks competent to maintain their incumbents, the practice is condemnable upon the face of it. Neither do I see how a professorship in either university is compatible with the pastoral duties, especially of a distant diocese: what between parliament and the
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functions of his professorship, such a prelate will find little time to dedicate to a residence amongst his clergy.

If these objections should appear to your lordship, as if I was yielding to the necessity of the reform you have proposed, I beg to say, in arrest of any such construction, that though I admit the abuse of preferments held *in commendam*, I do not admit that this abuse can no otherwise be remedied than by levelling the bishopricks.

The state and condition of every bishop ought in all reason to be such as should rouse and encourage the inferior clergy to emulate their superiors in those laudable and distinguishing attainments, to which alone it is to be presumed they owe their elevation. There never was, in any period of our history, a bench of bishops filled by men of more acknowledged merit, than the present; there never was a monarch on the throne, who has kept the fountain of ecclesiastical honour purer than the reigning sovereign has done from the period of his accession. If however, any one of the present bench accumulates in his person ecclesiastical preferments *in commendam* with a bishoprick sufficient,

as I before observed, of itself to support his dignity, it is to be wished, (if any such there be) that prelatical monopolizer were reduced, and that one should be diminished rather than the whole order be disgraced. No man, my lord, can dispute the advantages of sending back into circulation amongst the inferior clergy those preferments which are generally and actually held *in commendam*: I am humbly of opinion most of these might be discharged; but if this cannot be done, and the bishopricks left upon their present footing, still I cannot see the necessity or the prudence of doing it by your mode of levelling the episcopal revenues, for reasons, which I shall hereafter submit. In the meantime, till I am better advised, I must believe, that if those bishopricks only were aided, which cannot duly be supported without aid, the rest of the clergy would have no cause for complaint, and the bishops would furnish no occasion for obloquy. I hope I shall not be misunderstood to speak personally on this occasion; the state has thought fit to adopt a civil reform in this time of public exigency, but I could never without deep regret be spectator of a reduction

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tion of the revenues of the clergy, whether dignified or undignified. I am aware that your lordship's proposal does not go generally to this point, but partially and particularly it does; an innovation, which, with some popular features to recommend it to the world upon a first view, involves such consequences as threaten ruin to the hierarchy. When I say this, let it not be understood that I ascribe any but the best intention to your lordship: and if in the course of these remarks I treat your arguments with a freedom that the press admits of, and in fact demands, when truth is our pursuit, I hope I shall not be accounted wanting in that personal respect, which I have long and sincerely entertained for you.

The second argument, which your lordship uses in recommendation of your proposal, is, that it would be a means of promoting the independence of the bishops in the house of lords, and of preventing the influence, which either actually affects, or is suspected to affect, their minds too powerfully by the prospect of translation, and *induces them to pay too great an attention to the*

beck of a minister. This is a consideration of your lordship's starting, and of which I am follower and not leader : I hope to treat it, notwithstanding, with all becoming decency, though I see no reason for shrinking from the investigation in any particular. Here is a charge, or (if you please) a suspicion of secularity and corruption of principle in the spiritual lords, stated in the way of argument by one of the bench, as a motive for levelling their revenues, for the purpose amongst others, of removing out of sight the tempting lure of a translation, by which any one or more of the bishops may be induced to follow *the beck of a minister.* This observation met you in the academic groves of Cambridge, for your own experience of their lordships in parliament, at the time of writing this pamphlet, could not well have furnished you with foundation either for adopting or rejecting the imputation. It is worthy observation, that you state the influence as operating, to no other evil bias than that of following *the beck of a minister.* It is the crime of supporting his Majesty's government, not that of following any factious leader into opposition, that your lordship levels at ;
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and yet if we are, for the sake of argument, to suppose the bench of bishops subject to be corrupted in their parliamentary duty by the expectation of translations, that expectation may in many cases be derived from the leaders in opposition, as well as from the ministers in immediate office. The transitions of power in our government have been so frequent, that worldly-minded men are as likely to *oppose* out of motives of self-interest, as they are to *support*. You have therefore either overlooked this part of the danger, or you think it no danger at all; yet I am unwilling to believe that you think every man who opposes a minister, gives an unequivocal proof to the world, that he does it with a clear conscience, and acts for the good of the state.

There is another species of parliamentary attachment (to give it no harder name) which you either had not in contemplation, or have not taken any measures to prevent; and this is, the partiality of gratitude, the political attachment, which some are suspected to have to their patrons and benefactors. I can hardly persuade myself that, in your commerce with mankind, you have
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taken up that unfriendly opinion, which gives them no credit for the principle of gratitude ; and yet your scheme makes no provision against the attachments that may be supposed to arise from it. Can a lord spiritual act in political concert with a lord temporal, for no other reason but the expectation of future promotion on the bench ? May he not be suspected of following the measures, and supporting the politics, of his friend, in gratitude for promotion past ? And if he follows *the beck of any man*, is he not equally a follower, whether the man who *beckons* to him be a minister, or the opponent of a minister ? Is not the state robbed of his free opinion and advice in both cases alike ?

It must occur, from the nature of things, that many spiritual lords enter parliament with connexions very apt to give a bias to the human mind : some of them will be found to be the cadets of noble families ; some allied by marriage or otherwise, to men in power and office ; some are advanced to the bench by particular patrons ; and instances will occur, of bishops who owe their elevation to those who have been their pupils, and
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for whom they have contracted habits of attachment, little short of parental affection. It is not within the compass of human wit to invent a regulation to restrain the influence that will be apt to spring from these connexions. The proposals suggested by your lordship have nothing of this sort in view; and I must beg you to observe, that they are framed to no other purpose than that of disabling the lords spiritual from following impulses of the basest and most mercenary sort; impulses, supposed to result from the sordid principle of selling their consciences to a minister, in the hope of obtaining promotions in the sacred function to which they belong. Instances of this description may have existed, to the disgrace of the church; but let any serious and experienced person question himself ingenuously on the subject, and, I am certain, he will acknowledge, that for one example, where he can fix the imputation alluded to by your lordship, many will occur to his recollection of the nature I point at, and for which your scheme makes no provision.

The question therefore, as far as it respects the *secularity* of the bench, turns upon this
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single point—whether it is worth while to reverse the established order of the episcopal revenues, and reduce the incomes of Winchester and Salisbury, for instance, though distinguished with the insignia of the Garter, to the level of Landaff and Bangor, and to equalize the episcopal palatine of Durham with Sodor and Man, for the purpose of preventing those inferior prelates from an act of baseness, which it is to be presumed is not, and will not be in their contemplation ; and which, after all, if it does, or ever shall exist in the persons of such prelates, cannot be remedied by the scheme recommended by your lordship, or by any other scheme within the reach of man's invention. Why should we not conclude, that the language which flows from your lordship's pen, passes in other men's hearts in the same predicament with you ? *I should think myself utterly unworthy the favour I have received from his Majesty, and the sacred office to which I have been appointed, if either fear of offending, or expectation of pleasing, or any other consideration on earth, could influence me to disguise my sentiments on any subject of civil or religious importance.* These are your lordship's words,
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speaking of yourself, these are the professions you have published respecting your own independence, whilst you are proposing laws to restrain the corruption of your brethren of the bench. We are willing to credit you, why should we suspect or impeach other men? Either you think better of yourself than you do of your brethren, or you are proposing regulations upon a reason that has no foundation. Here is an avowal of independence in your own person, and an insinuation of corruption in the persons of your brethren: nay, you must suffer me to say it is more than an insinuation, it is a charge in direct terms; for you proceed to say, that *you do not deny, nay, you are willing to admit in its full extent, that your plan is calculated to reduce the influence of the crown over the bishops in the house of lords.* How your brethren may feel this, I do not pretend to guess; but as you did not chuse to publish your opinions whilst you was a private man, from an humble apprehension that it would be thought a *great presumption*, it is evident, at least, that your elevation has not increased your humility and fear of offending. It might indeed be prudent not to attack the
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mitre till you had one on your own head; but it surely was not a prudence, which arose from respect to the bench, from candour towards others, or humility with respect to yourself. Your own character you have displayed to the world in colours of the most self-flattering cast; your brethren you have shadowed in the darkest tints of meanness and corruption. If you had communicated your proposals to the bishops, or submitted them in your place to the legislature, in short, if you had chosen any other method, or any other time and station in your life, than you have now chosen for publishing these opinions, the invidious part of them might have been avoided; the beneficial (if there is any part that answers to the idea) might have been as effectually recommended. Shall we suppose your lordship to have been actuated by worldly views in suppressing these opinions, whilst you was a candidate for the mitre? that would be to call in question the veracity of your declaration, and to suppose you capable of being influenced by *the fear of offending*, when you have publicly professed from the press, that you have a soul superior to such sordid influence :

fluence: that would be, in fact, conceiving as ill of your lordship, as you do of your brethren; which I for one, as a layman and a Christian, should be ashamed to conceive, much less to publish to the world.

Glowing as your lordship's bosom must be with all the conscious exultation of superior virtue, and with a just contempt for that mean character, which you emphatically stile the *secularity* of the bishops, I rather wonder that your zeal for purifying and reforming the bench did not publickly shew itself before you took your seat upon it, that so you might have entered as the *strong man* does in the parable, and found *your house ready swept and garnished*. Surely it stood in as much need of sweeping before your consecration, as it does since; nay, we might justly doubt, if it did not stand in more need, as we have your lordship's own authority for knowing, that one of the most incorrupt and independent men living, fills one of the least eligible bishopricks in the whole list, and consequently one of the most obnoxious to the temptation of a remove. If any bishop on the bench might be betrayed into a wish for a translation, the bishoprick

shoprick of Landaff, in any other hands than your lordship's, is the very see where such a man would be looked for. If it should ever enter into the head of a minister to lure the conscience of a spiritual lord by the hope of a translation, such a minister would be as likely to apply his temptations to the possessor of Landaff (*cæteris paribus*) as to any bishop on the bench. Nay, I should suspect, even if your bill takes place, and *this little change*, as your lordship calls it, in the church establishment is effected, that the bishop of Landaff, though made equal in revenue to London, Winchester, Salisbury, or Ely, might still have a preference to one of those situations, and not be proof against the allurements of a translation. The comforts of a good house at Fulham, Chelsea, or London, the splendors of a stately cathedral, choirs, altars, thrones, even the insignia of the Garter appending to his person, might conspire to draw off his attachment from his little humble hovel amongst the mountains of Wales, to the greater indulgences, as well as dignities, of the capital or its vicinity.

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Whilst you, my lord, maintain the post of temptation, let the tempter attack you if he dare. Long, very long, therefore, may it remain in your firm possession ! For if the great seducer of mankind, if Satan, who probably takes more joy in the seduction of a bishop than of any common man, and who is also more apt to take the form of a minister than of any other man, should be *beckoning* to some future bishop of Landaff, and pointing to the dome of Paul's, or spire of Salisbury, I own I tremble for the virtue of your successor. I am clear therefore that the best thing which can happen will be for your lordship to hold inflexibly to your station, unless you could level the churches and palaces, as well as the patronages and revenues ; unless you can frame your bill for *making the rough ways smooth, and the crooked paths straight*, and bring the now distant mountains of Wales to a proximity with Chelsea and Fulham. But as this may not be possible even for a *levelling act* to effect, you have still the resource *in petto* of bringing Mahomet to the mountain ; and, if I was worthy to suggest an amendment to your bill, it should be for a clause to direct

the building of a decent row of tenements, in the fashion of bettermost alms-houses, in some convenient spot, in a cheap country, where the bishops shall be lodged, the said lots and tenements to be exactly equal in dimension and convenience:—That these shall be furnished and appointed at the public charge, with the like critical equality, and every occupier to be under a disability of adding to or improving his particular lot or tenement, so as the same shall be made in any respect preferable to or different from those of his neighbours and brethren:—That as some dioceses are more distant and of greater extent than others, and as the well-known zeal of the bishops may lead them to prefer those of great labour to such in which the duty is more light, there shall be a regulation of circuits after the manner of the judges, in which the senior bishops shall be gratified with the more laborious visitations to their share, as an example whereby to animate their younger brethren, and tending to the edification of the whole Christian world:—That the visitation circuit of *Sodor and Man*, as being attended with more fatigue and danger than any other, shall be the apostolical

tolical privilege of the archbishop of Canterbury :—That all preferments of whatever class, in the gift of the church at large, shall be bestowed in rotation, as the same shall fall in ; and the said preferments shall be so apportioned amongst the clergy of the diocese wherein they fall, that as far as possible every man's income in the church shall be brought to a level, without attention to the merit or demerit of the party :—That all temptation to obey *the beck of a minister*, from the prospect of a translation, being thus removed, it will be the duty of the bill to provide against every other species of influence which may operate upon the opinions of the lords spiritual in parliament ; but as it will be difficult, or perhaps impossible, to eradicate from the minds of the bishops all gratitude and predilection to benefactors and patrons, all natural leaning and affection to relations in office and power, or to connexions contracted by marriage or otherwise, it shall by this bill be enacted, as a means to put to silence all suspicions of the purity of their parliamentary conscience, and totally to defeat the insinuations of the malicious, that in all civil questions affect-

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ing the state (fully convinced that no minister ever had the good of that state at heart) they shall vote uniformly and with one consent against the court:—In all questions touching the concerns and interests of the church, well assured they can have but one way of thinking in the case, they shall be left to vote according to their own free choice and arbitration.

Modified in some such manner as above, the bill, I hope, will be sufficiently restrictive upon the bishops to satisfy your suspicions of them, and the laudable abhorrence you express against the secularity of the bench. I am sorry that such tight restrictions are in your lordship's opinion necessary to secure their independence, and that we are taught by one of their own number to believe there is so much less conscience in the church than in the law. Before his present Majesty's accession, the judges held their places on precarious tenure; the privileges of the mitre have been always more secure. Bishops have indeed, upon a stretch of prerogative, been committed to the Tower; but the prince who sent them thither had good cause to repent of it. Are the bench
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of bishops at this moment less independent than the bench of judges, either in point of tenure, or in point of revenue? If there are allurements of translation in the sacred order, are there not also such in the legal? The chancellor, and the chiefs, are virtually the archbishops of the law. Nay, I should be warranted in asserting that the allurements, which the crown (or, if you please, the minister) has to hold out to the judges, are greater than he has to offer to the consciences of the bishops; for the peerage, which in the latter instance is an annexation to the order, in the former case is a temptation to enhance the influence of the court above the interests of the subject. Yet who will breathe a doubt of the independence, or of the purity of the judges? Why then should we indulge suspicions in disfavour of the bishops? Is the education, or are the habits of a parson more inclinable to corrupt his conscience than the practice of a lawyer? Must the sacred order be shackled by the fetters of an equalizing law, and the legal one be left open to the allurements of ambition, and the spur of emulation? Shall the bishops be levelled, and chained down to the

bench, like a gang of galley-slaves, to keep them quiet and *prevent their rising* ; and shall the judges be left at liberty to forge the fetters that confine these galley-slaves, nay to whip them to their duty by the lashing scourges of the law ? I should hope there is no call for these restrictions ; I should hope you are suspicious of your brethren without cause ; and, conscious as your lordship justly is of your own integrity, I could wish you thought more favourably of the integrity of others. Is it an uncommon sight to see the bishops divide in civil questions of state against the wishes of the minister ? Several of the bench, and some who possess no very desirable situations, were seen upon late occasions conspiring to displace the minister. If in general they think and vote alike, shall it be urged as matter of disgrace against them ? On the contrary, is it not much to their reputation to be found united in the support of his Majesty's government upon general questions of civil import, and not splitting and dividing into petty factions upon every contentious matter that opposition starts, in its determined animosity against ministry. I hope my words will not be carried further than

than they mean. Few men in my sphere of life have less cause to confide in ministers, and none, I hope, have more occasion to lament the having trusted them, and served them. I hope there will ever be found wise men to watch them, good men to oppose them, and resolute men to punish them : but I would have no men tease them or cripple them for mischief's sake ; and least of all would I have such a spirit of obstruction find a place within a bishop's bosom. Upon the vacancy of Canterbury, more than one prelate was found, who declined the offer of the primacy of all England ; and a bishop has been raised to that high station, who owes his elevation to his merit. Though it would be a very pleasing task to speak of every individual of a bench so respectably filled as the present, I forbear to state further particulars, for reasons too obvious to need an explanation.

Taking it for granted, that the bishops are under the influence of the crown, your lordship infers, that this bill will tend to lessen that influence ; and you enter upon a speculative discussion of the many evil consequences incident to such a system of govern-

ment. In doing this, you guard the public from suspecting that you have any wish at heart of lowering the legal prerogative, or of seeing a preponderation in the people's or nobles scale of the constitution over that of the monarch. It is against that part only of the regal influence your wishes point, that extends itself to the deliberations of the hereditary counsellors of the crown, or the parliamentary representatives of the people; and you instance the late pernicious effects of that influence, by whose predominancy for a course of years, *the brightest jewel of his Majesty's crown is now become tarnished, and the strongest limb of the British empire rudely severed from its parent stock.* This instance, without doubt, refers to the conduct of the late war respecting America; which began with the revolt, and terminated in the loss of the colonies. Your lordship imputes all these misfortunes to the influence of the crown over the deliberations of its public counsellors; which, if they had been left free and unbiassed, would have produced such measures, as in the end had prevented those misfortunes you deplore.

Weak or wicked must be that sovereign, and unworthy to be called the father of his people, who assigns over his influence to a minister for the crooked purpose of forcing measures upon a parliament against the interests and the judgement of his subjects. This is the implication of your lordship's charge, and a very serious one it is. Not content to attack with plain prose, you draw the weapon of the drama on this occasion, and quote the following lines, viz.

*It is the curse of kings, to be attended
By slaves, who take their humours for a
warrant,
And who, to be endeared to a king,
Make it no conscience to destroy his honour.*

This quotation follows your protest against the fatal predominancy of the crown's influence in the late instance of the American war: your application therefore is too pointed to be mistaken. If you had painted the minister as the tyrant over the king, the king, being a slave, had not been responsible for the abuse of his influence; but your quotation

tation states the king to be the tyrant, and the minister the slave, who takes *his humours for a warrant*. Your's is an unqualified accusation; I may add, it is also an unprovoked one; for it was not by necessity that the reduction of the bishopricks should lead you to the revolt of America: neither would it have been any impeachment to your discretion, after the recent bounty of the crown, if you had spared your benefactor.

Permit me to add—as your lordship has helped us to the example of St. Chrysostom for sleeping with an Aristophanes under his pillow, and given us the above quotation from the drama after his example, it may not be impertinent in me to offer another passage from the stage, though I do not venture to recommend you to put it like a bridal cake under your pillow, as it might chance to set you a dreaming. It runs pretty nearly in the same words with the passage you have selected, though not from the same author; viz.

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“ It is the curse of kings to be insulted

“ By men, who grow presumptuous on
preferment,

“ And who, to be endeared to the people,

“ Make it no conscience to arraign their

“ master.”

I shall not enter far into this question with your lordship, because you have started it in the most unfavourable moment for its agitation. There needed not your lordship's authority for imputing the misfortunes of this fatal war to the influence of the sovereign ; the emissaries of America have reported this inflammatory doctrine, and echoed it in her ears repeatedly : the incendiaries of England have circulated it ; but reason, truth, and loyalty reject the hateful assertion.

You have stirred a question, my lord bishop, too complicated to be understood, except by those who are furnished with an intimate knowledge of the proceedings, with great impartiality, and acute discernment. The least that can be said, is, that in thus pronouncing on the fact you have *begged the question* in some very material points. And

first I must observe, before it can be pronounced that the separation of America was owing to the predominancy of his Majesty's influence over the two houses of parliament, it should be proved that the revolt was owing to it: this alone, my lord, would be a disquisition that no man could manage without complete official information. It is not *inter sylvas academi*, this point can be properly sifted; it is not within the researches of erudition, or the speculations of literary theorists, to decide upon this position: it must turn upon historical evidences; and these can be known only by men who have been intimately conversant in the affairs of the colonies from times long past. Events of notoriety all men of observation will agree upon; but nice attention must be paid to the leading causes of those events, else we should spend our words in the air without any fixt object of controversy. If there was a premeditation of revolt, whether that premeditation was or was not precipitated into overt acts of revolt by the misconduct of government, still it cannot be pronounced that the colonies would not have been severed from the empire, though the influence
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of the crown had not been unduly exerted to corrupt the judgement of the legislature. If there was an original independant motive for attempting the separation, we may dispute upon the propriety or impropriety of the means pursued for frustrating that attempt; but we cannot fairly pronounce that it would not have been carried through but for the insufficiency and unfitness of those means. How does it appear that the war with America was not the war of the people, but of the king and his ministers? If your lordship cannot prove that there was no necessity for *coercion*, the point in question will rest between the deliberative and the executive servants of the public; and, though you have thought proper to decide against the minister only, others may have something to oppose in extenuation of your sentence. In short, a thousand dubious points present themselves to a dispassionate enquirer, which must all be cleared away, and made to stand in charge against the minister, before you can with justice place to his account, and to the evil influence of the crown, the revolt and loss of the American colonies.

It is necessary to prove that the colonies never
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meditated a revolt from the mother country ; that, if they did, human prudence could have dictated means for it's prevention ; that the measures which were taken, were taken against the sense and conviction of the majority of the legislature, and over-ruled by the unconstitutional influence of the crown ; and lastly, that the exertions called forth from the nation by the minister, and by him committed to the executive agents, were in fact so miscalculated and inadequate, that they must have failed, though managed with the greatest possible address and ability in operation. Men are subject to errors in action, as well as errors in judgement : of the former you make no account, to the latter you impute the whole. Demonstrate, therefore, that no misfortunes are imputable to the executive conductors of the war, or prove that the deliberative conductors were so erroneous, that the like misfortunes must have ensued from mere necessity, and without mismanagement in point of operation. When this is done, you will bring the charge completely home to the minister ; and, having established this postulatam to your satisfaction, you must convince your readers that the sense of

parliament

parliament was against the measure, and that the crown by its influence overruled and perverted the better judgement of the legislature. This is a question that cannot be decided by any one man's decree ; historians it is to be hoped will faithfully record the facts, and posterity will give judgement when passion is extinct.

Your lordship has declared yourself in the following words, viz. *Not one jot of the legal prerogative did I ever wish to see abolished.*— All good men, anxious for the maintenance of our civil liberties, will accord to this wish. Times have been, when the royal prerogative was a topic held to be too sacred in its nature to be profaned by the discussions of a subject. Elizabeth told her parliaments to forbear discoursing upon matters of state ; that they *ought not to deal, to judge, or to meddle with her prerogative royal.* King James, with a pedantic circumlocution suitable to his character, laid it down as a proposition in his speeches, that *as it is atheism and blasphemy in a creature to dispute what the Deity may do, so it is presumption and sedition in a subject to dispute what a king may do in the height of his power ; good Christians will be content*

content with God's will, revealed in his word; and good subjects will rest in the king's will, revealed in his law. We now hold a language more suitable to our constitution, and the limits of regal authority are defined, canvassed, and laid down with precision. Farther to contract and narrow these limits, would be to destroy the equipoise of our constitution and throw it from its hinges. The object which modern patriotism views with jealousy, is the *influence* of the crown; whether regulations lately enforced have circumscribed this *influence* sufficiently, or too much, time will discover, without my presuming to obtrude an insignificant opinion. Honest men cannot differ in their sentiments upon the principle of political corruption; they must unite in abhorring the idea. But to conceive that government will be carried on by the loose opinions and advice of extra-official members of council or parliament, may be a very pretty speculation *inter sylvas academi*, but will never hold in practice. The hired servants of the crown must do the business of the crown: if a minister shall attempt to govern by the opinions of the public, this country will soon be found in
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a state of anarchy and confusion : reduced as the king's prerogative now is, his influence in the state should be touched with a very tender hand, otherwise it may prove, that whilst we think we are lopping off only the rotten branches of corruption, we may find to our cost that we have destroyed the root and sap of the tree : the vigour and energy of execution must be left entire, and in which of the three branches that exists we need not be reminded. The knife perhaps has pruned too deep already ; if this be so, the consequences will be soon apparent : and these will be, a turbulent interference of the people ; intemperate alterations in the constitution under specious titles of reform ; quick successions of administration ; secession and revolt from office, and a dread of responsibility in men of station and experience ; sudden elevation of new people, whom clamour raises into consequence, and desperation forces upon undertakings above their talents, their condition, or experience ; every revolution of the ministry will be an arrant scramble for office, and as few can be fed, though all will be hungry, the mouths that are left empty, will be left open, and loudest

in the cry of discontent. The tenure of office being rendered vague and fugitive, men will plunder with rapacity what they possess themselves of by violence; like tenants warned from a lease, they will rack the soil for a crop, convinced they shall not wait the sowing of another; or, to borrow an allusion from your lordship's publication now before me, they will treat their places with that kind of neglect, which your plan imputes to bishops in inferior sees; and consider them only as the stepping-stones of ambition, and baiting-places in the road to preferment.

When this turns out to be the case, it will appear that those mistaken measures, which were taken on the plea of preventives against corruption, have ultimately been the promoters of it, and that by reducing the influence of the crown, they have impaired the vital strength of the state: when *this* turns out to be the case, the staff of office will tremble in each hand that holds it; the sovereign will find himself surrounded by a succession of faces new to the court, and his body under guard of those, who are even strangers to his person. A king without influence will have a minister without power,
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and an impotent minister will make an impotent nation. The great earl of Chatham said, *he quitted councils which he could no longer guide* ; the language indeed was high, but it was the language of efficiency : a short time will show whether these are consequences to be apprehended, or not. Upon the whole, I see no demonstrative reason to accuse the bishops of worldly-minded motives, because in general they support the measures of the crown ; for if opposition be, as some men believe, the result of party, and a struggle for civil employment, the bishops, who have no civil employment to struggle for, have not those motives for opposing as the temporal peers have, and will of course in general divide with government, though you could level their revenues with such nicety, as to leave no preference in the choice of preferments, that might influence the consciences even of the most pliant.

Another probable consequence of the proposed plan, is stated by your lordship to be, the *longer* residence of the bishops in their respective dioceses. By *longer* residence, it is to be presumed you mean *longer* in proportion to their possession, or in other words,

cloſer and more conſtant reſidence : and you moreover think, *they would be induced to render their places of reſidence more comfortable and commodious.* This opinion merits ſome examination.

In all duties and profeſſions, men require ſome ſpur to quicken their exertions for the attainment of excellence in their particular vocations ; in other words, they muſt be roused by emulation, and the proſpect of riſing to more diſtinguiſhed honours and advantages than they already enjoy : ſhut this proſpect, and their ardour cools. Every man's experience in life confirms this obſervation ; it does not want to be explained, and it cannot be diſputed. Rewards inſpire a zeal for virtuous attainments, as puniſhments deter from the commiſſion of evil deeds. Tell a man he is at the end of his race, that he has nothing further to contend for, and he runs no further, he contends no longer ; he ſinks into the languor of content, or ruſts in ſullenneſs and negligence. It appears to me that your lordſhip's propoſal is open to this general objection, that it is calculated to extinguish that degree of emulation, which is created by the hope of profit and promotion.

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That you can suppose a bishop subject to be acted upon by these motives is evident, from your apprehension of their being influenced by the crown, the fountain of honours: grant only that the crown is capable of bestowing honours according to desert (and your lordship cannot well deny what your own example proves) you admit my reasoning in its utmost force of objection. Reduce the bishops to the level condition of a convent of monks, you render them at once a swarm of drones; and whether they sleep within or without the pale of their own diocese will be a matter of small concern. As the case now stands, if a young aspiring prelate enters a new diocese, he looks around him for occasions of distinguishing himself; his zeal communicates itself to the subordinate clergy that fall within his notice; they look up to him as a rising man, and strive to recommend themselves by peculiar assiduity and good conduct; thus life and spirit circulate from his center, and his ambition gives a spring to all around it: the contrary to this must happen, if your lordship's regulations were adopted. Examine how it stands in other callings and professions. Tell the clerk in office, he is

at the utmost of his earnings, and you will soon find him at the end of his exertions ; if he drudges through his daily task, 'tis as much as you can look for ; change the scene before him, by holding out the hope of advancement, and he becomes alert. In the military profession 'tis the expectation of a *step* ; 'tis *young ambition's ladder* that sets men to climbing : convince him that he has no more to look to, and, like *Lucullus's soldier—posthæc ille catus*. 'Tis a coarse and vulgar saying, but a good one, that “ new brooms sweep clean.” And if ever I should hear of any attempts to alter and reform the established church, I would risque a guess that it originates with some young aspiring prelate, hot in zeal and new in office, who, by correcting others, wants to signalize himself.

As to that part of your lordship's expectation, which supposes that the bishops under your bill would set about improving their places of residence and rendering them more comfortable and commodious, I believe the very reverse would inevitably follow. Many of the wealthy bishopricks are endowed with stately palaces, erected and maintained at
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great expence, and several with pluralities of mansions, which, upon your proposed scale, could not be kept up, much less improved by their possessors. How would the reduced bishops of Winchester, Durham, London, Worcester, &c. be able upon their revenues to support such expensive palaces in any decent condition? and who but would shun a bishoprick so encumbered, unless he was a man of independent fortune?

Upon a review of this argument, it appears in the first place doubtful, if your lordship's proposed bill would induce the bishops to a closer residence. In the second place, I hold it certain, that, if it did, they would reside in their dioceses with infinitely less effect than they do at present, for the reasons above given. And in the last place, it is a contradiction in terms to suppose that a bishop will maintain and improve his place of residence upon a reduced income, better than he will upon an extended one.

As your lordship professes a disinclination from spending any further time in delineating a scheme, *which either the more comprehensive wisdom, or the more efficient prejudices of other men, may quash at once*, I shall also

decline any further remarks, though very many occur in objection to the proposal. It may not be amiss however to premise, that I shall have occasion to come back again to the consideration of this *levelling bill*, in the course of my remarks upon your lordship's second proposition.

This proposition your lordship states to be for the introduction of a bill into parliament, *for appropriating, as they become vacant, one third, or some other definite part of the income of every deanery, prebend, or canonry, of the churches of Westminster, Windsor, Christ Church, Canterbury, Worcester, Durham, Norwich, Ely, Peterborough, Carlisle, &c. to the same purposes, mutatis mutandis, as the first-fruits and tenths were appropriated by the act passed in the fifth of Queen Anne.* You observe that this must be done with the special consent of the crown, many of the said preferments being in his Majesty's gift; by this I presume is meant the *previous* consent of the crown, which it will certainly be necessary in the first instance to obtain, and to state in the bill.

Having stated the purport of your bill to his Grace of Canterbury, your lordship pro-

ceeds to address him in the following words : *This proposal will, I am sensible, be very differently received by different sorts of men ; SOME will consider it as an attack upon the hierarchy, as tending to lower the church establishment ; OTHERS will think that it does not go far enough, they will prefer levelling to lowering, the abolition of deans and chapters to their reduction. So much may reasonably be said on both sides, that I cannot on this occasion stop to say any thing on either side ; and my business indeed is not so much with deans and chapters, as with a very useful, with what SOME will not scruple to call the most useful part of the clergy—the parochial clergy.*

This, my lord, is a very extraordinary passage in many particulars, and demands a more minute examination than I would generally wish to give to what your lordship has thought fit to publish.

You tell the archbishop of Canterbury that you are sensible *some* people will consider your proposal as an attack upon the hierarchy ; *others* will think it ought to be extended to the abolition of deans and chapters : in short, that the whole public (included under the opposite distinctions of *some*

some and *others*) will divide upon your measure ; *some* thinking that it goes too far ; *others*, that it does not go far enough. The expression justifies the above construction, nay, it admits none else ; for there is no mention made of any third class or description of men : these two, of *some* and *others*, comprehend the whole. However, my lord, let this pass as mere inaccuracy of expression ; let us wave the verbal interpretation ; it is not upon words I would contend with you, let us meet upon the sense and spirit of them, if that can be discovered. You state two orders of people in the extremes of opinion touching your proposal ; each of them adverse to the measure of your bill. The members of both houses of parliament, through whose hands your bill is to pass before it can take effect, are presumed to come under the first description of opponents ; for as no sectaries can hold a seat in either house, it is to be expected none will there be found who maintain opinions so adverse to the church, which their own authority has *established*, as to join with your last-mentioned class, who are for abolishing the dignitaries which you propose to reduce.

Your right reverend brethren also may well be supposed to hold the first opinion ; and probably the good metropolitan, now deceased, to whom your pamphlet is addressed, was of that way of thinking.

Let us consider how your lordship treats these opinions, which you have stated to the archbishop as being adverse to your proposal. You tell him that so much may reasonably be said on both sides, that you cannot on this occasion stop to say any thing on either side. This is a singular mode of treating the person you write to, and the subject you write upon. You address the archbishop of Canterbury by a printed pamphlet, proposing to him a very important alteration in the church establishment ; you tell him that *some* people object to your proposal as going too far, *other* people object to it as not going far enough, that there is much reason on both sides, and on that very account you cannot stop to say any thing to his Grace on either side. Had the objections been trifling or contemptible, you might have so dismissed them ; nay, you might more probably have forbore to state them at all ; but this is not the case, even
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by your own confession. 'Tis more than probable, as I before observed, that your brethren of the bench are included in one of these two classes, and yet you cannot or you will not stop to answer their objections. Is this fair to your subject ; is it respectful to your correspondent ? Is the topick upon which you write, a matter of small consequence to church or state, that you should run from it in such a hurry ? And what species of hurry is this, which gives you time to object, and leaves you none to defend ? What kind of avocations are these, which allow you leisure to start difficulties, and none to tell us how those difficulties may be got rid of ? You do not come out by compulsion as a reformer of the church establishment, you are a volunteer in the office. If you had taken a little more time and experience of your new dignity ; if you had consulted your brethren, and ripened those ideas, which you conceived *inter sylvas academici*, by the conversation of men of business and of practice in the state, with whom your elevation now enables you to communicate, the world would not have reproached you for indolence in office ; and if you had
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then thought fit to have printed your proposals for the reform of the establishment at large, or of that order in particular to which you personally belong, those proposals would not have been the less mature in judgement, the less respectful to the public, or the less becoming of yourself, if they had appeared after due deliberation and experience, seriously weighed and fully explained. In few words, my lord, I conceive nobody would have thought you had been too late in time, though you had been less in a hurry; nor would any one have found fault with your indolence, though you had delayed publishing till you understood your subject.

In the passage above quoted, you are pleased to say, that your business is not so much with deans and chapters, as with a *very useful part* of the clergy, the parochial clergy. If I could suppose your lordship capable of a leaning to those opinions, which are for the abolition of deans and chapters, I should suppose it from this passage; in which you plainly and pointedly distinguish the deans and chapters from what you call the *useful part* of the clergy. I would not force a meaning on you that is not your
own;

own ; but what other interpretation will this passage bear, but that it is with *the useful part* of the clergy, and not with the deans and chapters, you concern yourself? And yet I should be humbly of opinion, when you take property from one man and give it to another, you have equal business with both ; it would not be easy to convince the losing party, or any party, of the contrary ; the thing speaks for itself : and I am apt to think it is rather a concise way of dealing with any order of men, to suggest proposals for stripping them of their incomes, and then dismiss them by saying, that your business does not lie with them, but with *the very useful people* to whom you bestow the plunder of their revenues.

Not content with thus distinguishing the devoted deans and chapters from *the very useful* parochial clergy, you go on to say, that *some* people will not scruple to call the said parochial clergy *the most useful* part of the whole body. Here you find a word to fling at your brethren the bishops, and, by casting my eye back a few pages in your pamphlet, *some* people stare me again in the face, who are for driving the bishops out of
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the house of lords. The passage is as follows : *Some, I doubt not, will be ready enough to think that the state would receive little injury by the perpetual absence of the bishops from the house of lords.* 'Tis well for these *some* people, who are so ready to think of the bishops expulsion, that they have found a man so ready to speak of it. I suspect, my lord, that these *some folks* are the same as those *other folks*, that prefer the abolition of deans and chapters to their reduction. One thing however is clear, that between the two, our poor church and its establishment are completely disposed of. Farewell to all its dignitaries at once ! The schismatics will not say nay. *The dissenting clergy* (whom, says your lordship, *I cannot look upon as inferior to the clergy of the establishment, either in learning or morals*) will, I dare say, repay you the fine compliment you have made them ; and when you have effected your reform, and signalized yourself as *the great leveller of the hierarchy*, they will, I hope, admit you to the honour of an equality with that *learned and moral set* of sectaries, who, for good reasons, no doubt (else they could not be so learned) and for honest ones (else they

they could not be so moral) dissent and separate from the established church.

My lord, I tell you as your friend, these are new-fangled tenets and opinions, which, in spite of all the echo of applause, will not abide the test of reason and discretion, and which your cooler and corrected judgement will in time repent of and condemn.

When objections are stated so frequently, and left unanswered, in a publication, addressed indeed to the head of the church, but which, in effect, is an appeal to the laity, they are in fact suggestions, they have all the malice of opinions, and all the mischief of authority. What need of bringing in the dissenting clergy at all? What call for this unnecessary exertion, this voluntary parade of candour? Your subject does not require it; no tittle of your proposal points that way, nor does the hurry and precipitation with which you write, justify the digression. When deans and chapters are to be abolished, you have no business with them, you cannot stop to say one word in arrest of their extinction; the scape-goats may perish in their stalls for what you care. So great is your hurry to get through the task of reducing them, that if any one thinks
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it better to annihilate them, you have nothing to say to the contrary. How comes this hurry in one case, to be contrasted by so much leisure in another? When the established church is to be cried down, you cannot stop to defend it; when the dissenting clergy are to be cried up, you can stop, and stay the breaking off of your subject, to hook in their panegyric, though at the expence of a digression.

After having stated the purport of your proposed bill, your lordship proceeds to explain what I suppose will be asserted in the preamble; viz. that the general provision for the parochial clergy is inadequate and insufficient. You observe, that the revenue of the church of England is not well understood, and that *you have met a great many very sensible men of all professions and ranks, who did not understand it*: that these sensible men have expressed great surprize at being told by your lordship that the whole income of the church, including even the two Universities, did not amount, upon the most liberal calculation, to 1,500,000*l.* a year: and that upon this estimate, which you have good reason to believe to be near the truth, there would not remain to each individual, rating the clergy

at ten thousand, above 150*l.* a year, supposing that we had *no bishops to inspect and govern the church ; no deaneries, prebends, or canonries to stimulate the clergy to excel in literary attainments ; nor any colleges or universities to instruct our youth.* This provision, you observe, is so mean and scanty, that there can surely be no impropriety in wishing it to be encreased.—Certainly none ; the principle of the bill is laudable ; my exceptions are to the provisions of it. *Apothecaries and attornies, you observe, make as much by their professions, though in very moderate practice ; and unless the state will be contented with a beggarly and illiterate clergy, too mean and contemptible to do any good, either by precept or example ; unless it will condescend to have taylors and cobblers for its pastors and teachers, the whole provision for the church is as low as it can be.* If there was any intention in the state to lower the general revenue of the church, this observation would be more pertinent than it appears to be at present ; but if this is not the case, and if, on the contrary, the revenue of the church is a rising revenue, then where is the occasion for complaint or apprehension ? Are the clergy that beggarly and illi-

terate class of men ? Are they too mean and contemptible to do any good by precept or example ? Are our pastors and teachers literally *taylors and coblers*, or only on occasion the well-educated sons of *taylors*, &c. ? If they are not this beggarly and illiterate race of men (and that they are not, your lordship and the whole kingdom will admit) where then is the proof that their revenues are inadequate and insufficient ? Our churches are not served by *taylors and coblers* ; the state is not purposed to lower their revenue ; on the contrary, every year brings augmentation to that revenue ; whence then does your lordship derive that necessity for encreasing their incomes, so urgent and immediate as to suggest to you the proposal of taking from the deaneries, prebends, and canonries those emoluments, which you yourself acknowledge are the very objects that *stimulate the clergy to excel in literary attainments* ? This is a very extraordinary mode of arguing for the reduction of benefices, by proving the use of them. Deaneries, &c. stimulate our clergy to excel in learning. You propose to reduce those deaneries, &c. fearing that the clergy, if their incomes were lowered, would

be *taylors and coblers*. By your mode of arguing I might retort, that you would make the deans, prebendaries, and canons *taylors and coblers*, to save the parochial clergy from being such ; and I might ask how such mechanic dignitaries would *stimulate* to literature : but to say the truth, I do not like your lordship's way of reasoning well enough to make use of it.

A nobler use you could not find for any department of the clergy, than this which you point out, of giving emulation to the inferior order to excel in erudition and the science of their own profession. How are these worthy uses brought about, and why do these dignities in the church *stimulate* to erudition ? By their honour only, or jointly by their honour and emolument ? Certainly by joint attraction. Lessen those emoluments, spread them thinly through the body of the poor parochial clergy, what is the consequence ? Plainly this, they will either cease to *stimulate*, or *stimulate* in a less degree. The principle of emulation being crushed, the *literary attainments* will decline in proportion as their encouragements are diminished : let it be once more repeated on this occasion,

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that the same reasoning applies to the reduction of the bishopricks; the bench may still be an object for the inferior clergy to look up to, but it will no longer *stimulate* the bishops themselves to that laudable emulation, which gives life to every order and profession; and unless your lordship is of opinion, that a bishop, by the act of consecration, becomes at once in possession of all human excellence and perfection *ex officio*, I should suppose that the bench itself may, like their inferior brethren, profit by the spur of emulation, and owe perhaps some part of their present merit to that zeal for excelling, which the unequal distribution of preferment by natural consequence inspires. I would therefore earnestly recommend to your lordship to recall your assertion respecting the good effects of deaneries, prebends, and canonries, and before you propose to reduce them in value, convict them of inutility; let them be proved *stimulatives* to idleness, instead of *stimulatives* to excellence, and you will find your inference follow much easier than it does at present.

But as your lordship is unlucky in giving testimony in your own cause, so you are not

more fortunate in procuring it. The words of Dr. Bentley, which you quote from his *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*, make directly against your positions—*Do but once level all your preferments, and you will soon be as level in your learning.* This is part of the passage your lordship has selected in support of your proposal; which, in the opinion of your own witness, may as well be called a bill for levelling learning, as for levelling preferments. You have really anticipated me in this quotation, and I know not whether I am most obliged to your lordship for the honour you have done me in my ancestor, or the advantage you have given me in my argument. You have referred yourself to an umpire, to whom, on every account, I willingly submit my cause. Doctor Bentley, in this passage selected by your lordship, expresses his wonder why parents should design their sons for the church, under such mean encouragements in point of pay, till he recollects that *a few shining dignities in the church, prebends, deaneries, bishopricks, are the pious fraud that induces and decoys the parents to risk their children's fortune in it—and concludes* (speaking in the character of a foreigner)

reigner) that it is *this part of our establishment that makes our clergy excel his* : then follow the words above quoted, viz. *Do but once level all your preferments, and you will soon be as level in your learning : for instead of the flower of the English youth, you will have only the refuse sent to your academies ; and those too cramped and crippled in their studies, for want of aim and emulation ; so that if your Free-thinkers had any politics, instead of suppressing your whole order, they should make you all alike.* Few passages can be quoted more in point against your lordship's *levelling* proposals ; for though it is true you do not mean to *level* the orders, your bills will operate as if you had : the first, by reducing the bishopricks to a very moderate *level*, and throwing out the *commendams* ; the second, by stripping the deans and chapters, and distributing the better part of their income amongst the poorer clergy. Dr. Bentley observes, that a few shining dignities allure men to the service of the church, as a few glittering prizes tempt adventurers to a state-lottery ; and to the allurements of these dignities he ascribes all the advantages of the established church, and the excellence of the clerical character.

Your lordship proposes to melt down these prizes into the gross sum that compounds the small shares, and consequently must maintain a very contrary opinion to the authority you quote; for, unless it can be made appear that a small augmentation to certain poor livings, by your proposed distribution, will operate as a greater encouragement to the profession of the church, than the temptation which its undiminished revenues now holds forth to adventurers in that profession, it will be impossible to convince mankind of the advantages and good policy of your proposals; nay, in fact, conviction will make directly against your scheme, as tending to reduce those dignities, which Dr. Bentley appositely observes, are the *glittering prizes* which allure our youth, and those who have the care of them, to direct their pursuits to the profession of the priesthood. And what renders your scheme still more objectionable, and even fatal to the interests and honour of the church, is, that it directly tends to deter the youth of the best talents, birth, and education, from the profession; who certainly will not take orders with a view to sit down upon one of your
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poor livings, though augmented to a bare provision with the spoils of the dignitaries ; whilst at the same time it invites the mean, the needy, and illiterate, to thrust themselves into a gown, from the assurance of a support, however scanty. It is not therefore without good reason we may venture to predict the declension and disgrace of the priesthood, in the talents and characters of its professors, if ever the legislature should be so perverted in its judgement, as to adopt a scheme which you too hastily, and without communicating with your brethren, have laid before the public. Should that ever obtain, *Væ victis! vae victori!* the purer your intentions are in the proposal, the more poignant will be your disappointment and remorse, when you experience its effects.

You say the revenues of the church ought not to be reduced, and will not, with safety to the establishment, admit of it. I agree with you in the assertion: the state has agreed and still agrees. The revenues are not in danger of a reduction, they are annually in advance ; a great fund is rolling for their augmentation, and a vast sum lies ready in hand, at public interest, waiting for purchases, and
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accumulating in the mean time. The bounty of Queen Anne has been in operation and receipt near seventy years : but this, with other great resources, that you have either overlooked or neglected to explain, will deserve a more particular investigation.

Your lordship quotes the passage above referred to from Dr. Bentley, for the purpose of evincing the inadequacy of the church's preferments. It is true, he speaks of the cheapness of the priesthood; but he also says, that its temptations were sufficient to engage men of talents and education in its service. If it was adequate to this purpose, at the time of his publishing the *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*, it must be much more so at present, and consequently his testimony, as far as it goes, witnesses against you. As for your lordship's other quotation from Archbishop Whitgift, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, as found in Bishop Kennet's *case of impropriations*, it is much less in point to prove the present poverty of the church, than this passage from Dr. Bentley; but neither one nor the other have any thing to do with the case in question.

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The computations of the number of poor livings, which you collect from Dr. Warner and Dr. Burn, so widely differ from each other, that they only serve to bring calculations of this nature into doubt. The former of these calculators reckons 6000 livings not above 40*l.* a year, and he says he speaks from the best authority: the latter reckons only 4713 under the same description. Here is a difference of 1287 livings; which are we to believe? When therefore Dr. Warner says, *that it will be 500 years before every living can be raised to 60*l.* a year by Queen Anne's bounty, supposing the same money to be distributed, as there has been for some years past;* and when Dr. Burn assures us, *that it will be 339 years before all the said livings can exceed 50*l.* a year,* I think myself warranted in giving no credit to either of their calculations: but if any man thinks otherwise, and chuses to adopt either of these calculations, or to make his own upon the same premises, still I must observe, that such calculation will not give any adequate estimate of the future possible rate of augmentation, because no allowance is made for many concurrent causes of augmentation, which come
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in aid of that fund, upon which alone they found their calculations.

One of these causes is the benefactions of private patrons, which, in all the cases of livings under that description, keeps pace with the augmentations from Queen Anne's bounty. It should seem that neither Dr. Warner nor Dr. Burn take these benefactions into their calculations, which alone must make them grossly erroneous. Dr. Warner grounds his calculation expressly and solely upon Queen Anne's bounty, supposing the same money to be distributed as there has been for some years past. This at once destroys all the evidence of his account, as will hereafter be made appear. Dr. Burn computes the clear amount of the bounty to make 55 augmentations yearly, by which terms he expressly throws out of his account private benefactions : his calculation therefore is as erroneous as the former. Your lordship, sensible of the grossness of these miscalculations, computes *that half of such augmentations may be made in conjunction with other benefactors*, though you think this proportion too large ; and upon this presumption you reduce Dr. Burn's calculation of

339 years to 226 years (of which 70 are nearly expired) before all livings will exceed the said sum of 50*l.* a year. But what a loose mode of computing is this! Your lordship must know there are other causes co-operating for the encrease of the church revenues, and you must be well aware that this method of computing will not give us any thing near the true progress of the augmentation of livings. As it is no doubt in your power to resort to the governors of the fund, you might have informed us with precision what purchases have been made in mortmain from the fund in question, what sums have been paid in conjunction by private patrons, and (which is another cause of augmentation you do not touch upon) what bequests and donations have within that period been given in aid to the church. Your lordship knows, or may know, what these have actually been; I can only know that they have been too considerable to be left out of the account. One gentleman of the county of Kent *, if I am rightly informed, lately bequeathed the sum of twelve thousand pounds to the church: other instances might be given;

* Sir Philip Butler.

but enough has been said to shew how short and erroneous all calculations must be that turn singly upon the operation of Queen Anne's bounty, and how little we can depend upon loose guesses at private benefactions.

But there is yet another cause of encrease, from which the church has already reaped great benefit, and is in train to reap much more. Can it have escaped your lordship's recollection to state the great augmentation to livings, which the improvement of lands by inclosure and otherwise has occasioned, particularly in the northern and inland counties, where those improvements have mostly obtained? If this has not in all cases fallen where your lordship, and all good men, could wish it, upon the poorest livings only, still it has fallen to the church, and may contribute as such to prevent, what your lordship so piously wishes to prevent, the necessity of our pulpits being served by *taylors and coblers*. Let the number of inclosing acts, passed since the year 1714, be reckoned up, and a calculation taken of the advance made in the incomes of the parochial clergy, in consequence of this and other improvements in the value of lands, within
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the period of 70 years, and the augmentation to the church revenues from this cause alone will be found prodigious. I myself have met with instances of livings, that have been augmented by Queen Anne's bounty under one incumbent, raised by a succeeding one to comfortable incomes. New modes of cultivation, and a better system of agriculture throughout the island, have improved the value of lands prodigiously, and (to use Lord Chatham's words, as quoted by your lordship) *the church, God blefs it ! has a pittance* out of all men's labour, and advances *pari passu* with the state.

Many other collateral causes come in aid of the revenues of the church. The many new chapels erected upon private speculation, in the rich and overgrown parishes of the capital, contribute in no inconsiderable degree : and in time of war the chaplainships in our fleets and armies bring a temporary accession of revenue, and give employment to very many of the young and enterprising ministers of the Gospel. The stipends now given by our nobility and gentry of fortune, to the clerical preceptors and tutors of their sons, and the advantages derivable from the patronage

patronage of those families, operate sensibly as general aids and encouragements to the profession.

Upon examining the statutes I find, that from 1775 to 1780 inclusive, which is a period of six years only, 342 acts of inclosure were passed; a number far exceeding my guess, though I was prepared to believe them very numerous. In the last two years they amounted only to 36; but from the year of Queen Anne's bounty to 1775, I find 841 bills brought in for inclosures, though of the bills passed I did not take the pains to make a correct reckoning. Let any man, who has leisure and curiosity enough, make the calculation of profit to the church upon these inclosing acts, since the operation of Queen Anne's bounty, and I am sure it will turn out a very considerable aid; especially if it should appear that church livings in general have been raised in their value proportionably to the decrease upon the value of money throughout the kingdom. Upon this article of inclosures your lordship is totally silent; it makes against the necessity of your plan, but I should hope that was not your reason for suppressing it.

I have already hinted at the *accumulation fund* in the hands of the church, arising from the surplusage of the revenue yet undisposed of in the purchase of lands. As purchases cannot in many cases be found, either from the indisposition in the land-owners to sell, or from difficulties attending titles (in which the church, perhaps, is nice to an excess) it has been the prudent œconomy of the corporation, to reduce the interest to two per cent. only on the money destined to the augmentation of certain livings, till such time as the incumbent shall find a purchase suitable to the purpose of the church. Hence it has arisen, that a great surplusage has for many years been rolling; which being vested in the public funds at full interest, produces a secondary income, co-operative with the revenue of the first-fruits and tenths. Be this fund what it may, the balance of interest upon interest is now become part and parcel of Queen Anne's bounty; and it is evident, therefore, that all calculations, formed upon the bare income of the first-fruits and tenths, must be short and erroneous upon the face of them. Dr. Warner and Dr. Burn found their calculations upon

the money actually distributed for some years past; and now it appears that the money distributed has, for the above reasons, so far fallen short of the money collected by the bounty, and the interest upon the funded stock, that a vast surplussage has accumulated, as a fund for the future uses of the church, which bids fair, in a short course of time, to rival its parent stock. And in that case, it will no doubt be the wisdom of the church, and the wish of the state, to put this money to its proper uses, by giving to the poor livings the full amount of the benefit intended for them originally; and as for the surplussage of interest above two per cent. which has accumulated in the several cases where purchases could not be found, it will be matter of consideration, whether that should go to the respective benefices upon which it has accumulated, or in aid of the general fund to the uses of the church at large.

I love the church too well to press any question further than it's interests may warrant; but, informed as I am upon this subject, I am bold to say, and pledge myself for what I say, that the church of England is not at present so destitute of resource, as to
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make it necessary to resort to your lordship's scheme of reduction for the support of it's poorer ministers ; and therefore, if your lordship's scheme is not recommendable upon it's own merits, as matter of reform, it ought not to be adopted upon motives of necessity. In plainer words, my lord, the funds of the church applicable to the augmentation of poor livings, I do contend are sufficient to augment those livings, without reduction of it's dignities, in a much less compass of time than the calculations you refer to, and greatly sooner than men in general are aware of. If therefore these dignities, which you would reduce, were considered so essential to the prosperity of the church by doctor Bentley, whose authority you quote for it's poverty ; how much more reason is there now against reducing those dignities, when the poverty of the church at large, cannot be urged as a plea for the reduction you propose ?

It has been the policy of the body corporate, in whom the revenues of the first-fruits and tenths are vested, to make a mystery of their proceedings. It would be more for the honour of the church that this board

should not withhold from the friends of the church, such reasonable information as should be required from them: and if there is any immediate probability of these bills projected by your lordship taking place, it will behove them, in their own defence, to be more explicit. They are trustees for the distribution of a bounty granted by the crown to the church, and they act under powers vested in them by act of parliament: I am at a loss to find any good reason why a corporation so constituted, and to such purposes, should refuse to communicate such intelligence touching the application of their trust, as is for the interests of the church to be known.

By the act of the 5th of Queen Anne, passed subsequent to the bounty-act, the bishops were directed to certify into the exchequer the clear yearly value of small benefices with cure of souls, within their respective dioceses, in order that such benefices as did not exceed £. 50 *per annum*, should be discharged from payment of first-fruits and tenths for ever. It would be satisfactory to compare these returns with the present returns of small benefices not exceeding £. 50;

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it would be satisfactory to know the amount of monies vested in the funds, accumulated from the unapplied surpluse of the first-fruits, &c.; for these data would enable us to correct the errors of calculators, which mislead the public judgement and give an air of necessity to proposals for levelling and reducing dignities, which necessity I am satisfied does not exist, and which proposals I am sure are in their nature ruinous and fatal to the hierarchy.

Dr. Burn computes the clear amount of the bounty to make 55 augmentations yearly. He does not tell us what he calls the *clear amount*; but I rate it at 20,000*l.* per annum. It was about thirty years ago, upon a certain occasion, it appeared, that the corporation of Queen Anne's bounty had 300,000*l.* in the funds: how that may have since encreased, I know not; but if we add the surpluse of interest above two per cent. upon this capital, and take into account besides, the contribution of one moiety from the private patrons of all small livings augmented by the church, this computation of 55 augmentations yearly will be short of the truth. With respect to the annual income of the

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bounty, I believe I am correct ; as to the amount of the surplufage, if I am mistaken, it is to be hoped, they at leaft who withhold the information, will excuse the error.

Though it is probable your lordship's publication will not exactly produce the ends propofed, yet it is likely to be followed by confequences that will bring to light thefe *arcana* of the church. An innovating fpirit is fo prevalent in this age, and the word *reform* is a word fo popular, that the church will be driven to it's defence. The current of the times, my lord, is in your favour, and the weak efforts of an individual to ftem the fashionable propenfity, is at beft but an unthankful office. Other fchemes, I have reafon to believe, are in projection ; the fignal for conflict is thrown out, and the ftruggle muft finally be decided by ftronger hands.

If I am well informed, there is an egg in the neft, and one is brooding it, who will hatch a cockatrice: the time may be at hand when your lordship, with the reft of your brethren, may fly to your nurfing-father the King, the fupreme head of the church, and feek protection under that foftering influence which you now arraign :

“ Is this the honour you do one another ?

“ ’Tis well there’s one above you yet.”

(Shakesp. K. Hen. VIII.)

Depend upon it, my lord bishop of Landaff, these speculations of your’s will breed, and, though inefficient, and for that reason innocent in themselves, their progeny may be less inert ; the graft may bear fruit, though the stock is but a thorn.

I cannot in justice pass over one condition of your lordship’s proposal, which is not to operate for depriving present possessors of their property in these dignities ; *a measure*, you observe, *too full of injustice and cruelty to be thought of, except by selfish enthusiasts in times of public confusion*. I wish our *state-reformers* had thought as liberally on this subject as your lordship thinks. Happy would it have been for some families, who are now dismissed to poverty. Many of us poor reformed placemen may feelingly exclaim,

“ Had I but serv’d *the church* with half the

“ zeal

“ I serv’d my king, it would not in mine

“ age

“ Have left me naked.”

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Upon the subject of *mortmain*, which your lordship has slightly touched, I have only to observe, that if the difficulties of purchasing lands for the augmentation of small benefices have already been such as to occasion an accumulation so great as I suppose it is, it may be for the wisdom of the church to provide some means of prevention in future, so that the revenue of the first-fruits and tenths may have its full operation ; and this perhaps cannot be better done than by allowing the clergy to accept of certain payments from the funds, in lieu of rents from lands held in mortmain, according to your lordship's idea ; and this I think will call for speedy consideration, both from church and state.

And now, my lord, in conclusion, I assure you, that my motive for addressing this publication to you, has arisen solely from sincerity of opinion, and a strong persuasion of the evil consequences of disturbing the dignities and revenues of the church as now established. A love of controversy, or a vain conceit of trying strength with your lordship in this or any other question, never entered my mind. What may follow from it
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time will shew ; at all events, I hope it will not give displeasure to your lordship : if upon revifal I had found the paffage that could juftly give it, I had ftruck it out. You perhaps alfo will revife your Letter ; and one of two confequences will then enfue ; either you will, upon maturer thoughts, fee reafon to defift from your propofal, and then I know your candour will revoke what you have propofed ; or elfe what I have now objected, will draw forth from you fuch arguments in fuller vindication of your plan, as may convince the world of the foundnefs of your judgement, whilft they confute the weaknefs of my objections : in either cafe, the refult will be for your honour, and the church's benefit.

I am, &c.

R. C.

P. S. I beg leave, by way of Poftfcript, to throw out the following eafy calculations.

Dr. Burn, in his Ecclefiaftical Law, (article firft-fruits and tenths) ftates the number of fmall livings as follows ; viz.

Livings

Living's not exceeding 10*l.* a year - 1071.

D^o above 10*l.* and not exceeding 20*l.* 1467.

D^o above 20*l.* and not exceeding 30*l.* 1126.

D^o above 30*l.* and not exceeding 40*l.* 1049.

He computes the clear amount of the bounty to make 55 augmentations yearly.

Taking the numbers as above, without deducting the small living's augmented since his calculation, it appears that 55 augmentations of 400*l.* each, make 22,000*l.* yearly.

If we estimate the income of the bounty at 20,000*l.* this leaves only the sum of 2,000*l.* annually for benefactions of private patrons, bounties and bequests, &c. It is to be presumed, therefore, we are within the rate, when we compute as above 55 yearly augmentations of 400*l.* each.

400*l.* at 25 years purchase, buys a rent of 16*l.* per annum : I call it upon an average 15*l.*

1071 living's not exceeding 10*l.* a year, twice augmented by 400*l.* at 55 living's per year, will involve the income of the bounty something less than 39 years.

1467 living's above 10*l.* and not exceeding 20*l.* augmented once with 400*l.* and once with 200*l.* will involve the income of the bounty 40 years.

1126 livings above 20*l.* and not exceeding 30*l.* augmented once with 400*l.* will involve the income of the bounty 20½ years.

1049 livings above 30*l.* and not exceeding 40*l.* augmented once with 200*l.* will involve the income of the bounty 9½ years.

The sum total of years is 109.

N. B. In this calculation, the number of years passed since Dr. Burn made his estimate, should be deducted.

The benefactions at 2,000*l.* a year are rated too low, according to your lordship's computation.

The accumulation of interest money above the rate of 2*l.* per cent. is not taken into the account ; which, if applied to the respective livings on which it has accumulated for want of purchases, will raise them above the average rate of 400*l.* each ; if turned into the general stock, will raise the number of augmentations above the average rate of 55*l.* annually.

Livings raised by inclosure or otherwise, not accounted for ; and Dr. Burn's computation of small livings taken for granted.

